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**Report**

**Upper West Regional Stakeholders Meeting**

**June 18, 2014,**  **In-Service Training Centre, Wa, Ghana**

**1. Introduction**

Mr. Abu Huudu, the Regional Crops Officer asked for a volunteer to pray before the start of the workshop. Ali Ezekiel a farmer from Zanko volunteered and prayed for the meeting to start. Mr MYB Suglo one of the moderators introduced the chair in the person of Mr. David K. Waawula, the District Director of Food and Agriculture, Nadowli.

The chairperson gave a brief address by welcoming all participants to the occasion and entreated each and everyone to speak his/her mind when it was time for discussions.

Mr. MYB Suglo then asked participants to do a self introduction starting with him, and then the high table and the other participants followed.

Mr. Abu Huudu gave an address on behalf of the Regional Director of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) who was not present at the time. He gave an account of the project form 2012 till 2014. He noted that theThe Research and Extension Linkage Committee (RELC) is a body established by MOFA to co-ordinate activities of research and extension and ensures that farmers participate in research findings. He said that with RELC farmers appreciate the work of the researcher better and also learn some improve technologies.

Dr. Irmgard Hoeschle-Zeledon gave an address on behalf of the Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). She introduced herself as the Co-ordinator of the Africa RISING Project in West Africa and East and Southern Africa based in Ibadan, Nigeria. She also gave a brief introduction of the Africa RISING (AR) Project in West Africa being implemented in Mali and Ghana. She said, in Ghana, the project is being implemented in the Upper West (UWR), Upper East (UER)and the Northern (NR) regions. She ended the address by welcoming all participants and said it was a pleasure meeting and interacting with them.

**2. Background and objectives of the workshop**

Dr. Asamoah Larbi, Chief Scientist of the Africa RISING (AR) project for West Africa, stated that, the AR program is being implemented in West Africa (Ghana and Mali), East Africa (Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi) and the Ethiopian Highlands.

He explained that in Ghana, AR activities are being implemented in a total of 25 intervention communities with two districts in each region: 10 communities in the UWR (Wa West and Nadowli districts), 10 in NR (Tolon-Kumbungu and Savelugu districts) and 5 in UER (Bongo and Kassena-Nankana districts). The intervention communities were selected by the International Food Policy Research Institute IFPRI in collaboration with IITA using biophysical and socio-economic data.

**3. 2014 workplans and implementation strategies**

Dr. Asamoah explained that for this year, all planned activities have been categorized into work-pages, namely: socio-economic studies on sustainable intensification; raising and sustaining productivity in cereal-legume cropping systems; biological control of aflatoxins; integrating vegetables into cereal-legume systems; intensifying livestock and poultry production; raising and sustaining productivity of integrated crop-livestock production; management of land, soil and water to intensify cereal-legume production and improving household nutrition and value addition. He outlined the activities under each work-package and the lead institutions for each work-package.

**4. Research-for-Development (R4D) platform** Dr. Asamoah noted that the main essence of the workshop was to assist in setting up R4D platforms at both the district level and at the regional. He said that the Africa RISING project has a range of national and international partners working on different aspects of the project. He therefore used the opportunity to outline the objectives of the project as follows, to:

* Increase the productivity of small-holder crop-livestock farmers
* Improve household nutrition, especially the nutrition of women and children
* Improve household income by linking farmers to markets
* Improve the natural resource base ( oil, water and vegetation ), and
* Strengthen capacity of partners

1. On the R4D platforms, he said a committee chaired by Mr. MYB Suglo was set up with the mandate of identifying potential stakeholders and inaugurating the various district platforms before the end of July, 2014. The committee identified a tentative list of stakeholder institutions, including: Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA)
2. Council for Scientific and Industrial Research-Savannah Agricultural Research (CSIR-SARI)
3. Institute of Tropical of Agriculture (IITA)
4. Community based Organizations (CBOs)/ Non-Governmental Organizations NGOs
5. Financial Institutions
6. Women groups
7. Service providers
8. Policy makers / Assemblymen

**5. General discussions and comments**

Remarks made under this are:

* Mr. J.Y Faalong noted that for legally registered service providers they are only thirteen (13) in the region. Another group of service providers who sell fertilizers and agro-chemicals in the villages but were not in a position to sue and be sued, number one hundred and nineteen (119). He cautioned stakeholders present to use the platform as an opportunity for bringing their expertise together to achieve a common goal and not to think about taking something away from the platform. He also noted the assemblymen are very critical with regards to decision making at the local government level. Therefore, they should be included in the platform together with the Ministry of Health, and Animal Health and Production Division of MoFA.
* Mr. Hudi Alhassan of the Community Aid for Rural Development (CARD) came up with four (4) concerns. He wanted to know whether: 1) the project has a system in place to mobilize farmers into groups since farmers in groups work better than as individuals, 2) the target crops to improve upon the nutrition in women and children, 3) whether the project has diversified crops production through home gardening, and 4) what system is in place to disseminate these technologies from the intervention communities to other parts of the district.
* Dr. Irmgard in her response said that Africa RISING is a research project and not a development one but was quick to add that the research should be geared towards development. She therefore noted that the project is concentrating on the farming systems aspect of intervention communities whilst some actors could also focus on the others aspects of rural communities.

**6. R4D platform composition**

After several deliberations, participants agreed on the following institutions to be part of the R4D platform at district and community levels:

1. CSIR (SARI, ARI)
2. Rural banks
3. MoFA
4. Assembly men/policy makers
5. Chiefs and elders/ opinion leaders
6. Unit committee
7. Women group
8. Tindana/landlords
9. Ghana Health Service (G.H.S)
10. Veterinary
11. Ghana Education Service (G. E. S)
12. Nutrition
13. Agricultural Extension Agent (A.E.A)
14. Public relations (Electronic and print media)

**7. Roles and responsibilities of community level R4D platform members**

Chiefs and elders

* Endorse, communicate and facilitates community entry
* Queen or ‘Makazie’ exercises the authority of the chief on the women group

Tindana

* Makes land available through the chief

Assembly men

* Liaison officers
* Community mobilization

G.E.S

* Information dissemination through pupil to parents

G.H.S

* Advise mothers on nutritional and person hygiene
* Also on ante-natal clinics
* Demonstration on processing of commodities to address the nutritional aspect

Agricultural Extension Agent

* Extension education
* Technical backstopping
* Link farmers to input dealers and researchers

Veterinary / livestock officer

* Mobilization of staff to undertake curative and preventive measures and disease surveillance

Local radio station /print media

* Information, education on agricultural activities to the farmers

Community-based organizations or non-governmental organization

* Capacity building of farmers
* Creating linkages
* Dissemination of information

Farmer based organizations

* Mobilization of fellow farmers
* Farmer to farmer extension
* Seek assistance from MoFA

**8. Roles and responsibilities of district level R4D**

MoFA

* Backstopping technical support at the district
* Coordinating agricultural activities
* Report compilation
* Dissemination of extension activities
* Planning

CSIR

* Coordinate to generalize research agenda
* Implementing/supervision of activities at the district level
* Monitoring and evaluation

Financial Institutions (Sunzele rural bank/ Nandom rural bank)

* Agricultural financing schemes
* Nutritional plans for the district

Service providers

* Input supply to farmers
* Ploughing and harrowing
* Aggregation of agricultural produce

Department of Cooperatives (DOCs)

* Facilitate formation of farmer based organizations (FBOs)
* Capacity building/business and financial developments

**9. Closing remarks**

Mr. J.Y Faalong in his closing remarks entreated each and every partner to undertake his/her responsility seriously. He also noted that the participation of community dwellers should be done by the assembly members so that their electorate could use development project in the electoral area to either reject or accept his/her re-election.

Dr. Irmgard said that she was impressed with the participation of the various stakeholders present. She concluded by adding her voice to the call made by Mr. Faalong for every partner to try and deliver on their obligations.

Dr. Asamaoh finally concluded the workshop by thanking all participants including MoFA regional and district directors, assemblymen and all and sundry for their immense contributions.

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Group picture of participants





